

Chiru language

Chiru (*Naga*) is a Kuki-Chin-Naga languages spoken mostly in Manipur. The Chiru population numbers approximately 8,599. It is one of the least documented and a highly endangered language spoken in three districts of Manipur: Senapati, Noney district of Manipur and Cachar district of Assam. Chiru has been recognized as a Scheduled Tribe of Manipur by the government of India since 1956 under "The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Orders (Amendment) Act, Act No. 63 of 1956" Dated 25 September 1956. The total population of the native speakers of Chiru is only 8599 (Census of India: 2011). The native speakers have high proficiency in Meitei. The language is neither used in schools nor in radio or mass media. Older people read and write in Manipuri written in Bengali script, but the younger generation prefers Roman script.

The Chirus are one of the earliest inhabitants of Manipur and Assam. Cheitharol Kumbaba, the Royal Chronicles of Manipur mentioned that King Meidingu Chalamba defeated the Chirus in 1554. This proves that the Chirus had settled in Manipur long before this period. It was also mentioned in the Royal Chronicles of Manipur that an incidence of Meitei King's incursion on Nungsai Chiru Village occurred on 22nd day of Wakching (December–January) 1729 during the reign of Maharaja Garibniwaz (Cheitharol Kumbaba: 1989:90). In spite of the considerably long period of their settlement in the two states (Manipur and Assam), the population of Chiru native speakers is shockingly very low. The growth rate of their population was extremely steady. This might be due to high mortality rate and low birth rate in the previous centuries.

The domain of language use for Chiru is very limited. The usage of Chiru by Chiru native speakers is specifically confined only at home domain and within the community among the native speakers. The language proficiency of Chiru native speakers ranges from bilingual to multilingual. The native speakers in Manipur have high proficiency in Manipuri and those in Assam have high proficiency in Hmar, Manipuri and Sylheti Bengali. Chiru speakers in Manipur generally speak Manipuri, Hindi or English while those of Assam speak Hmar, Sylheti Bengali, Manipuri or Hindi at the time of interaction with non-Chiru speakers. The Chiru native speakers in Manipur usually speak either Manipuri or Hindi in the market place, office etc. Moreover, they also speak Paior Thwhen they interact with, and speakers respectively. On the other hand, Chiru speakers of Assam speak Sylheti Bengali, Manipuri or Hmar in the market places, offices or anywhere outside home domain. It is painful to mention that Chiru of Assam has not been recognized by the government of Assam. They are rather recognized as Hmar. Chiru is neither used in schools nor in radio or mass media. Older people read and write in Manipuri written in Bengali script, but the younger generation prefers Roman script. Even the children normally become bilingual at the minimum age of 5 since they acquire the second language in schools.^[3]

Geographical distribution

Chiru is spoken in the following locations of Northeast India (*Ethnologue*).

Chiru	
Rem	
Rem	
Native to	India
Region	scattered through Manipur
Ethnicity	Chiru Naga
Native speakers	8,599 (2011) ^[1]
Language family	<div>Sino-Tibetan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Central Tibeto-Burman)<ul style="list-style-type: none">Northwestern language<ul style="list-style-type: none">Chiru</div>
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	cdf
Glottolog	chir1283 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/chir1283) ^[2]

- Manipur
 - Tamenglong district: Lamdangmei and Dolang villages
 - Kangpokpi district: Kangchup, Thangzing, Sadu (Thangthilon), Bungte, Nungsai, Dolang Khunou, and Uran villages
 - Churachandpur district: Charoi Khullen village
 - Thoubal district: Waithou Chiru
 - Bishnupur district
- Assam: Budon Village Cachar district (a village near Jiribam)
- Nagaland (scattered)

[4]

References

1. Chiru (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/cdf/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
 2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Chiru" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/chir1283>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
 3. Awan, Mechek Sampar and . Mary Kim. 2018. "Nature and Extent of Endangerment in Chiru" A research paper presented in the 6th International Conference on Endangered and Lesser-Known Languages, Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysuru.
 4. Awan, Mechek Sampar. 2014. Segmental Phonology of Chiru. *Language in India* ISSN 1930-2940 Vol 14:10
-

Retrieved from "https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Chiru_language&oldid=957953712"

This page was last edited on 21 May 2020, at 08:15 (UTC).

Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.